



Union Turnpike and Austin Street Safety Enhancements

Transportation Planning & Management - Freight Mobility Unit

Presentation to Queens Community Board 6 – 4/16/21



Project Overview

1. Background
2. Existing Conditions
3. Proposal
4. Next Steps



Background

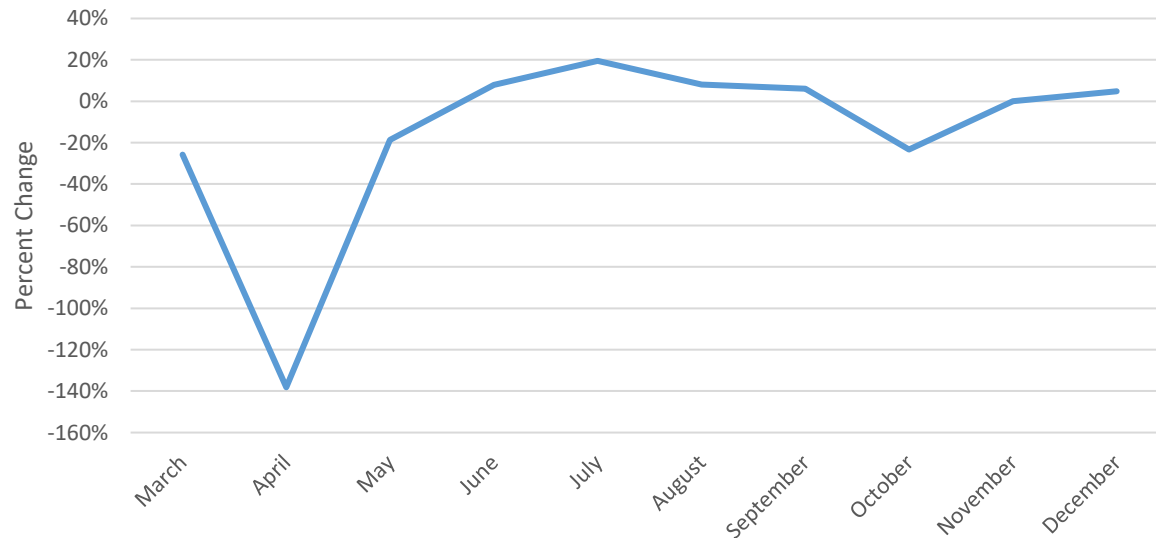
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Freight and Your Community

Project Motivation

- 95% of parcels in the Forest Hills area are associated with residential or commercial uses; local deliveries are an everyday necessity
- Rise of e-commerce and on demand delivery; 45% of New Yorker's get at least one delivery/week – this number has grown as a result of the COVID19 pandemic

Change in Truck Trips to Forest Hills Area (Compared to Pre-COVID Times) - 2020



Local and Through Truck Routes

Key Differences



Local Truck Route Network

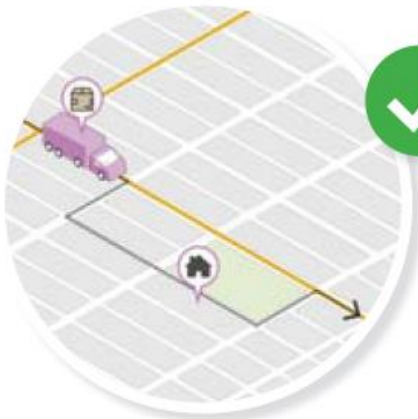
Designated for trucks with an origin and destination within a borough. This includes trucks that are traveling to make a delivery, or for loading or servicing.



Through Truck Route Network

Primarily composed of major urban arterials and highways and must be used by trucks that have neither an origin or destination within the borough.

When can trucks go off route?



Allowed
To make a delivery off
of a designated route



Not Allowed
To take a shortcut or
avoid traffic

Freight Toolkit

How We Manage Freight



Truck Safety



Truck Route Management



Street Improvement Projects



Bridge Strikes, Outreach & Partnerships



Neighborhood Loading Zones



Truck Route Signage

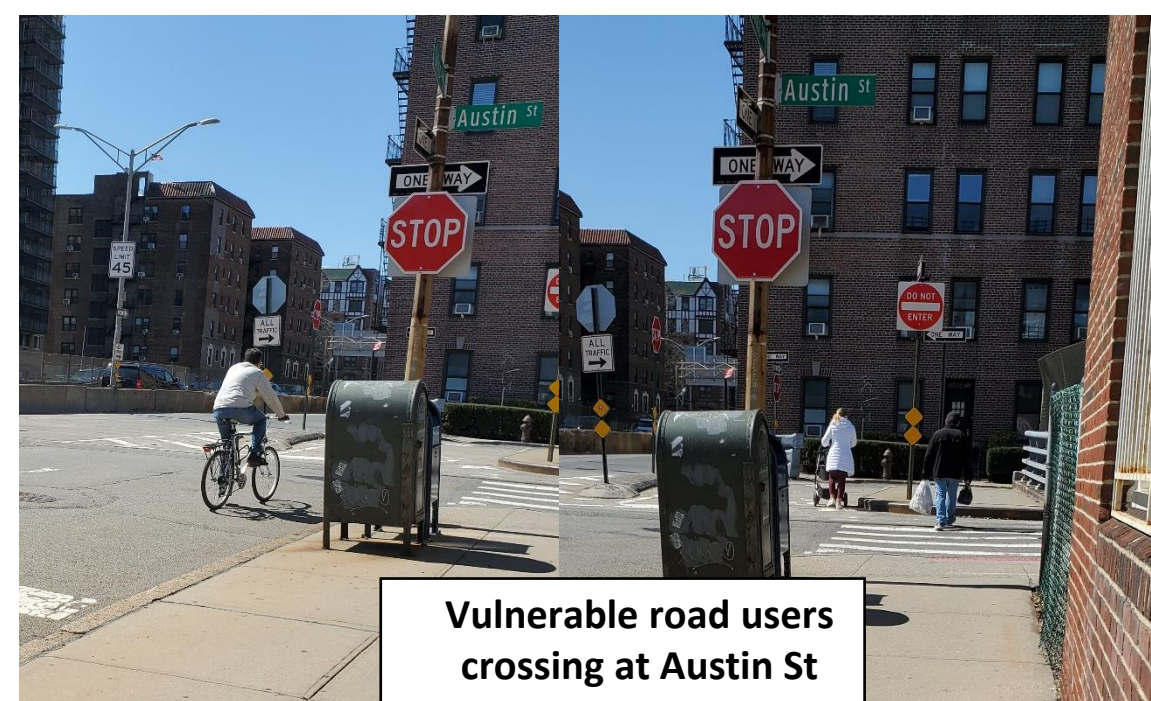
Existing Conditions

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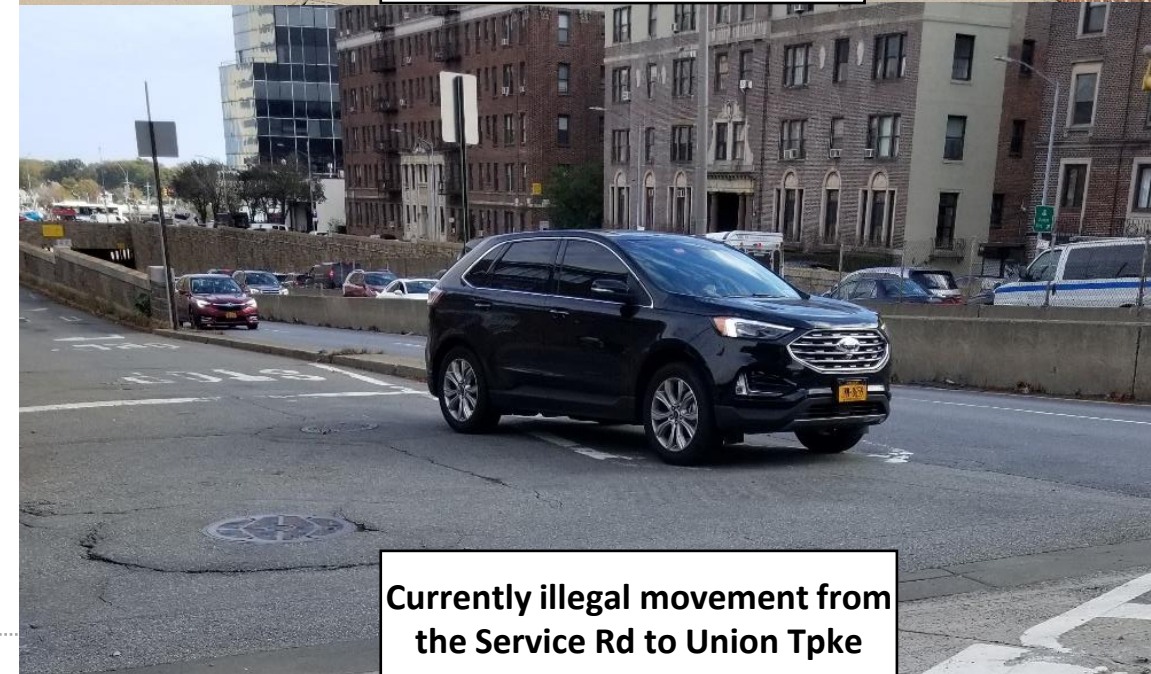
Project Location

Background/History

- A better, more direct, connection is needed between Queens Blvd and westbound Union Tpke; the Union Tpke Service Road could provide that connection, but vehicles are currently forced to turn off at Austin St into a more residential area
- Past Borough Commissioner Maura McCarthy previously expressed interest in improvements at this location
- Intersection is awkwardly aligned; the potential for head-on collisions exists, illegal maneuvers are made by motorists from the Service Road, a 'double right turn' condition exists
- Pedestrian walking across the intersection often cross via the U-turn space (no pedestrian ramps exist near the concrete island on the Austin St overpass)



Vulnerable road users crossing at Austin St



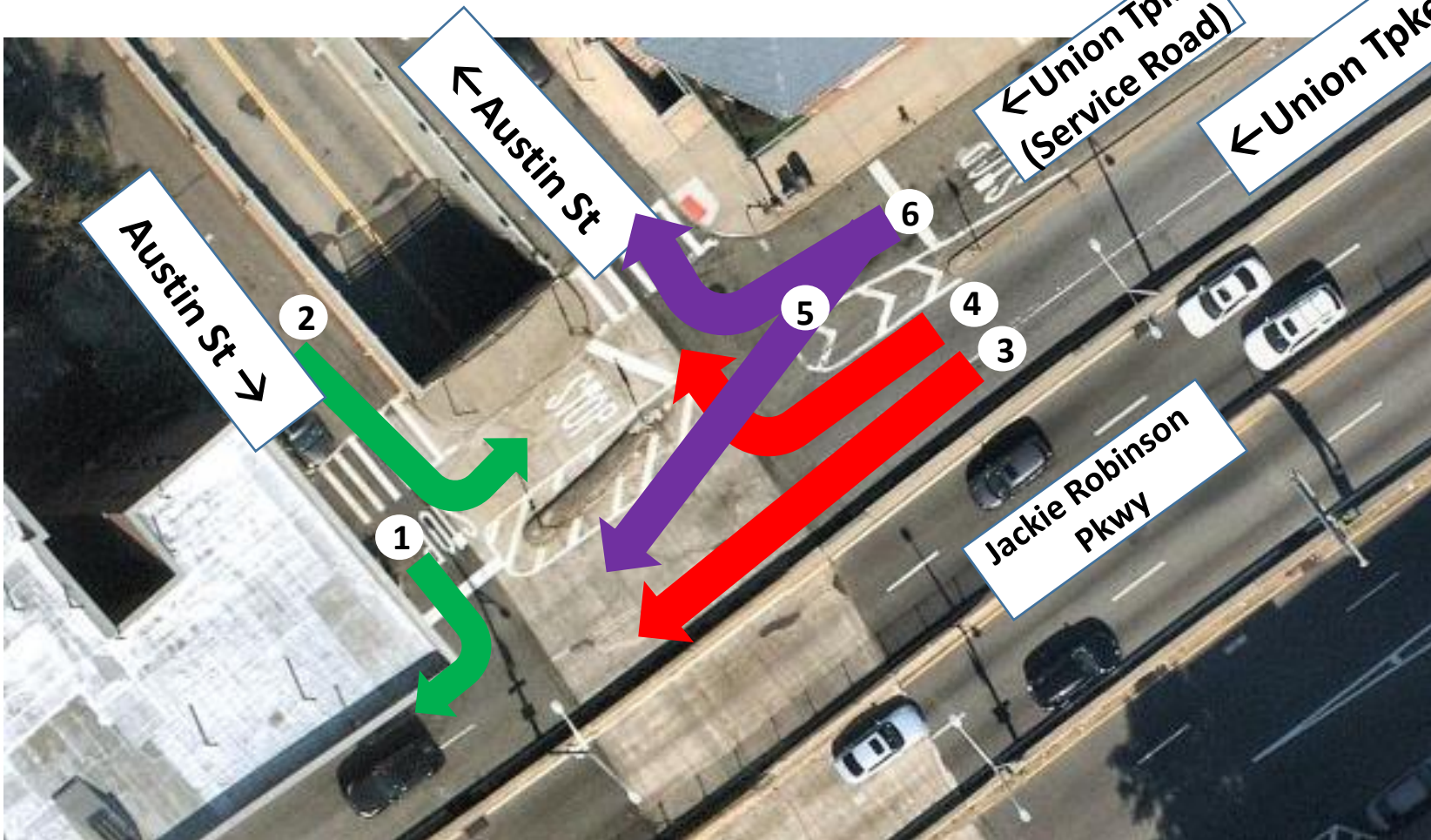
Currently illegal movement from the Service Rd to Union Tpke

Safety Concerns



Union Turnpike and Austin St (Queens): Peak Data

Data Analysis



Data collected during 4:30-5:30 PM (PM peak)

1. Southbound right: 14%

2. U-Turn: 1%

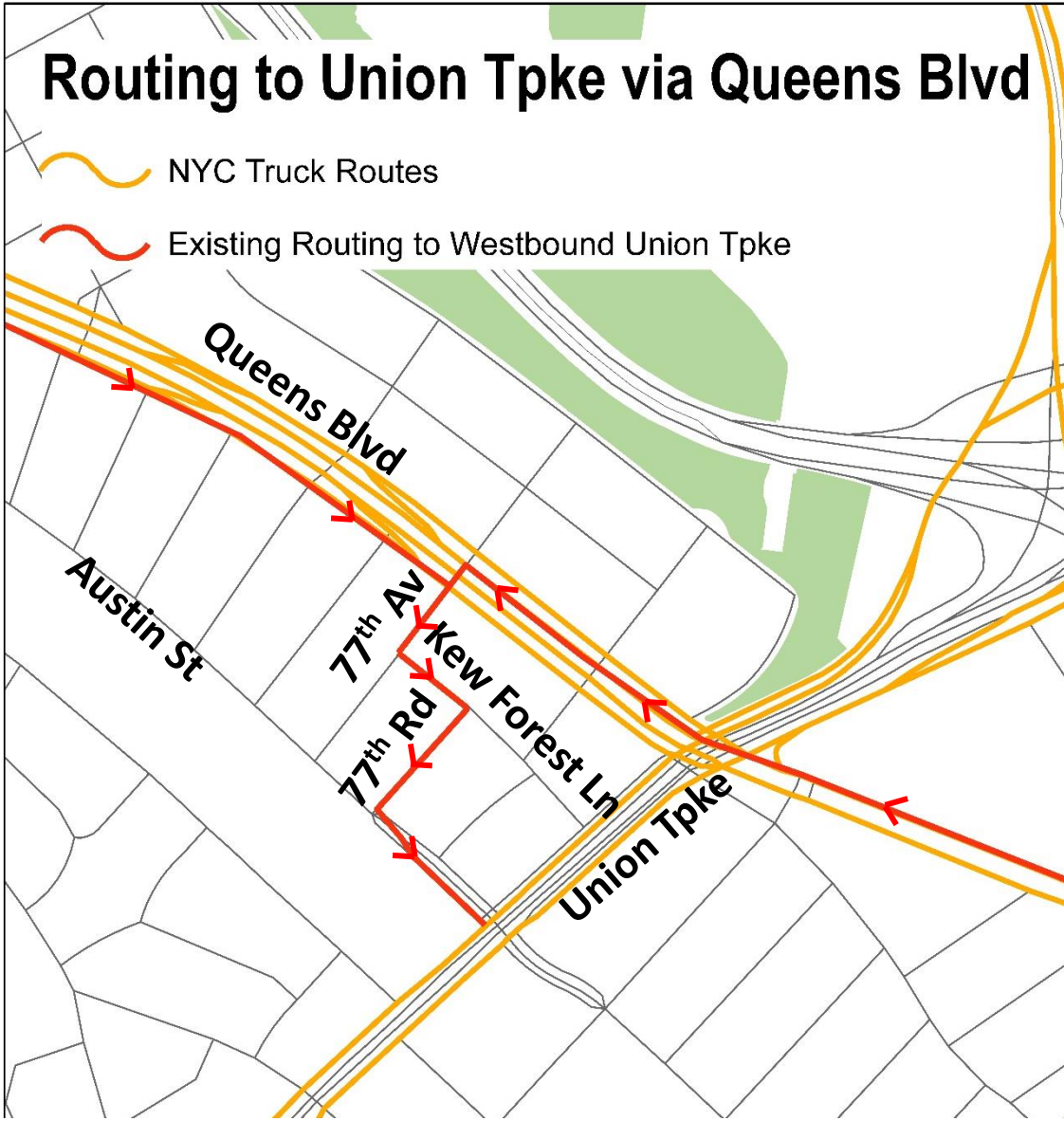
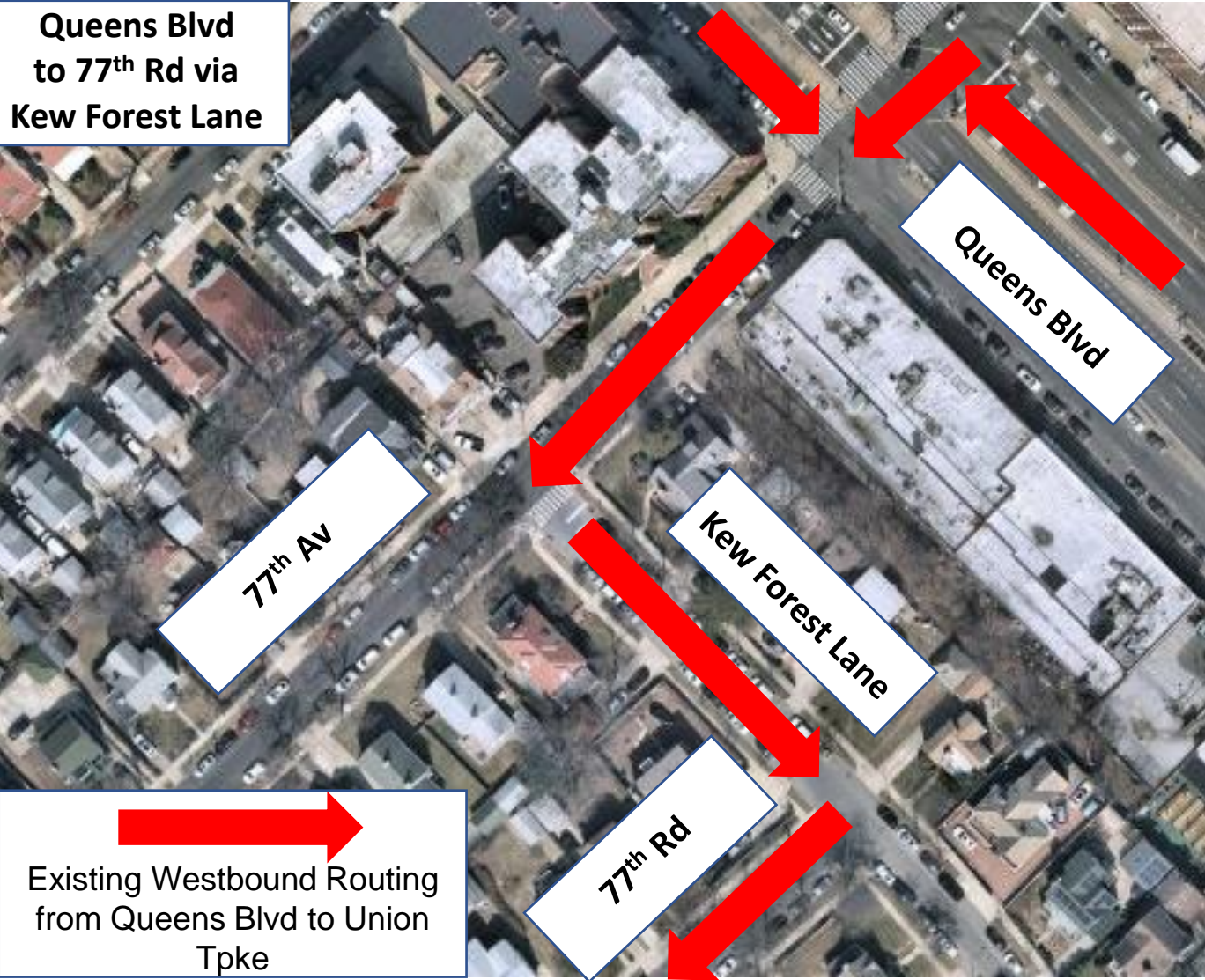
3. Westbound: 76%

4. Westbound right (via Union Tpke): 5%

5. Westbound left (via Union Tpke Service Road; not legal): 2%

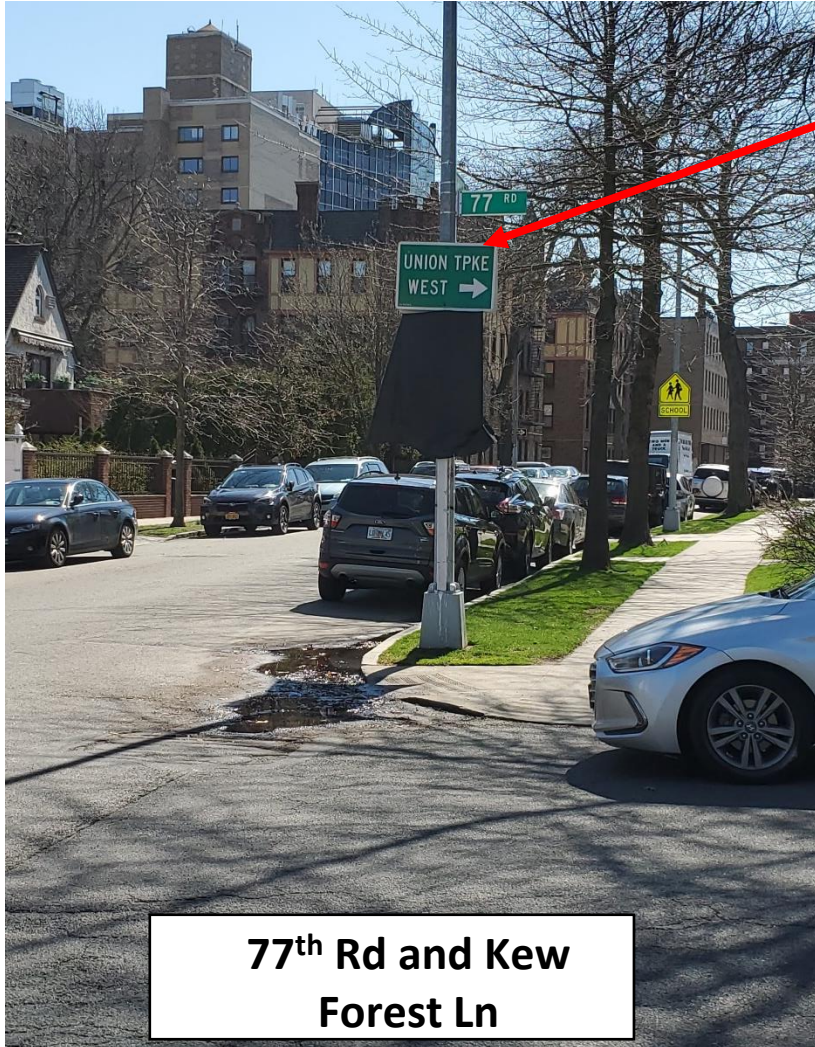
6. Westbound right (via Union Tpke Service Rd): 2%

Current Routing for Vehicles via Queens Blvd to Union Tpke WB



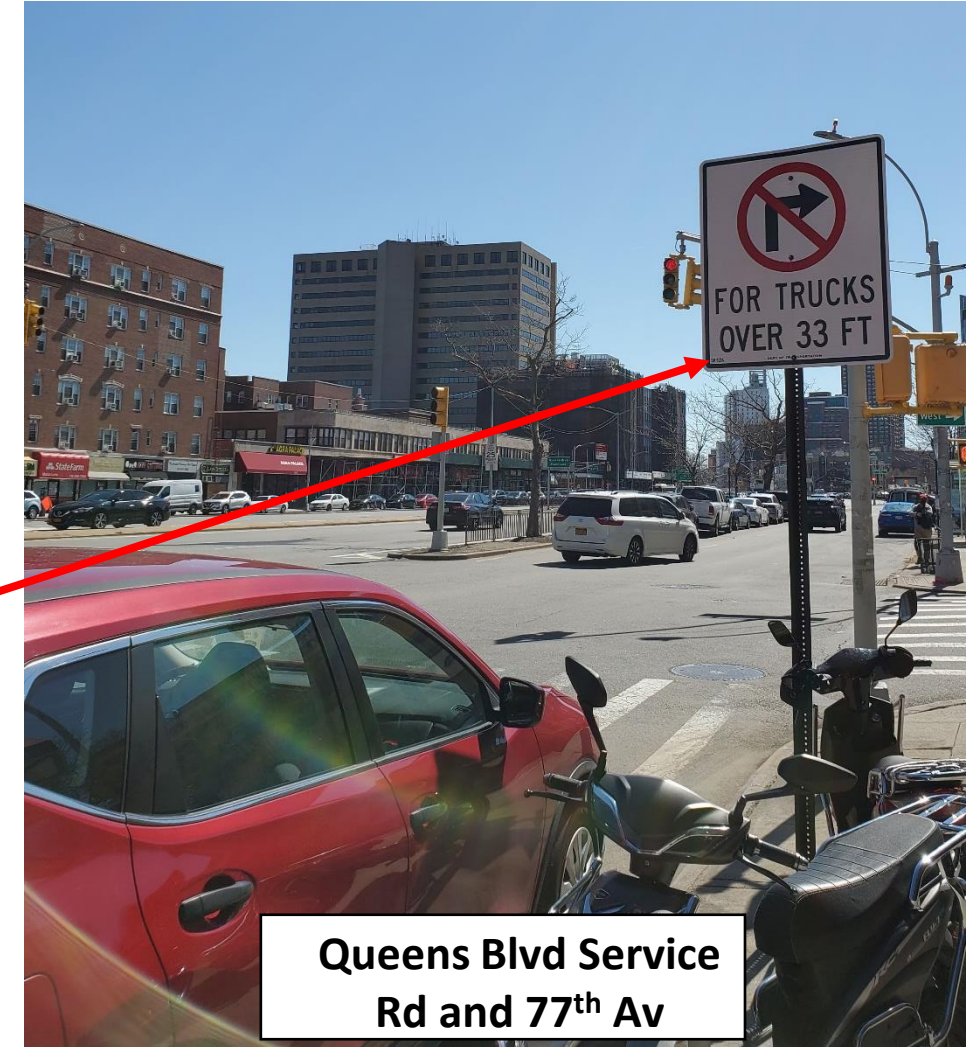
Existing Wayfinding for Reaching WB Union Tpke from Queens Blvd

Access to Union Tpke



Green wayfinding signs are posted for vehicles to follow for access to Union Tpke via local residential streets

Most trucks cannot use the prescribed route to reach Union Tpke due to a posted restriction; the Union Tpke Service Road cannot be used to reach Union Tpke going west



Proposal

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Union Tpke and Austin St Overview

Existing Conditions

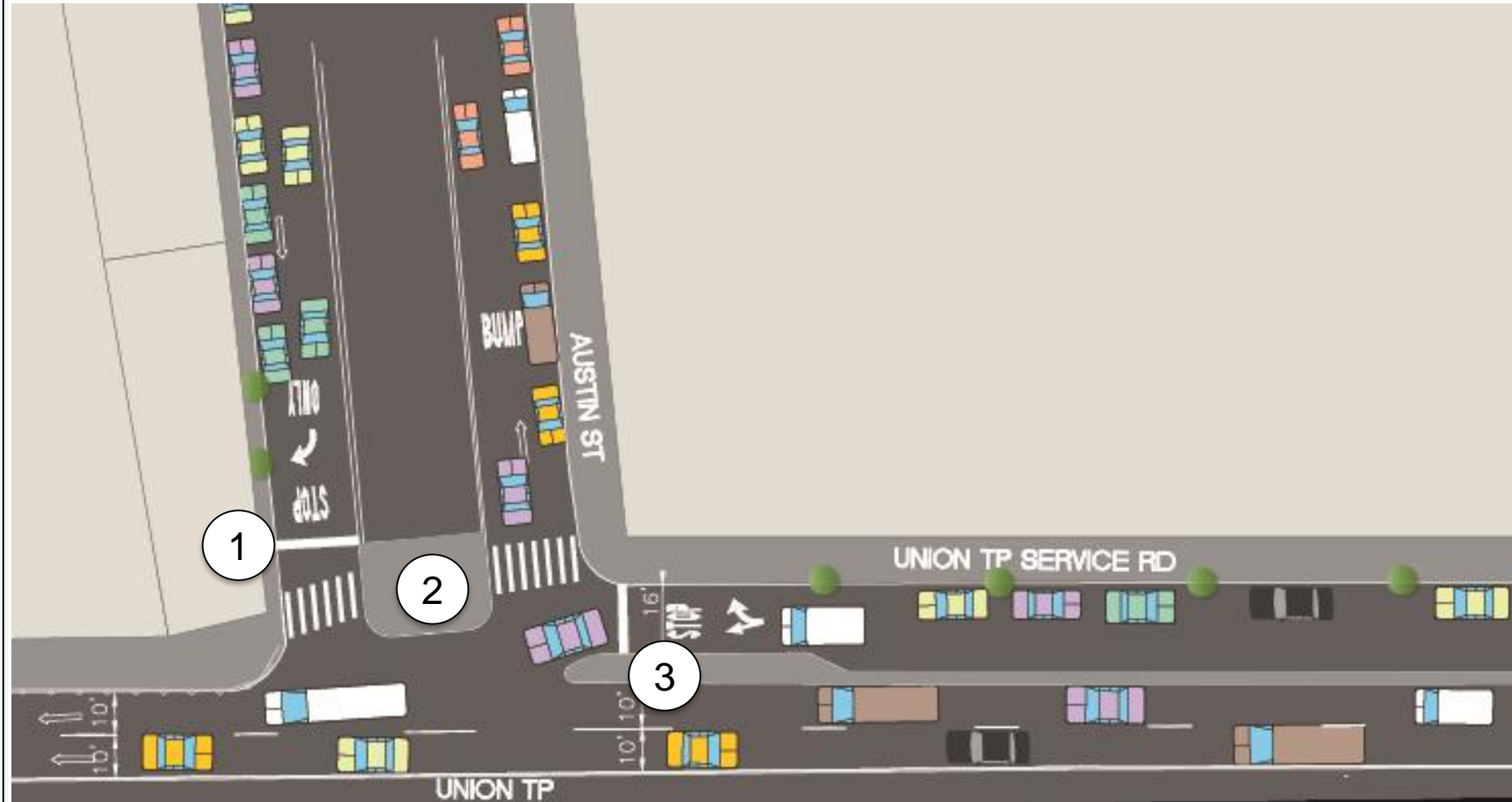
1. Cars queued up at the intersection often block the crosswalk due to the location of the stop bar
2. Slip lane for U-turn maneuver is underutilized, pedestrian island is not ADA accessible (and narrow)
3. Double right turn condition exists, not legally possible to get from the Service Road to Union Tpke, cut-through traffic via Austin St likely (destined for Queens Blvd)



Union Tpke and Austin St - Proposed Safety Improvements

Proposal

1. Bring intersection at Austin St SB and Union Tpke up to standard by:
 - a. Aligning the crosswalk with the (expanded) concrete island
 - b. Constructing new pedestrian ramps (ADA accessible)
2. Building out the existing concrete island (resulting in closure of the existing U-turn slip lane) to increase pedestrian space
3. Allow vehicles to access Union Tpke from the Service Road and restrict right turns from Union Tpke to Austin St to increase safety for all road users (concrete median to be extended out to facilitate the restriction by design)



Union Tpke and Austin St Overpass Location

Proposal Implementation Vision



**Union Tpke and Austin St
(QN)**



**Willoughby Av and Emerson Av
(BK)**

Next Steps

4

Next Steps

Timeline

Spring – Summer 2021: Implementation

Late 2021 – Early 2022: Continue project monitoring

Wayfinding

- Route wayfinding – direct trucks and other vehicles to use Union Tpke instead of residential streets

Curb Access

- Maintain parking and school loading access

Partnerships & Continued Outreach

- Continued outreach



Thank You!

Questions?



NYCDOT



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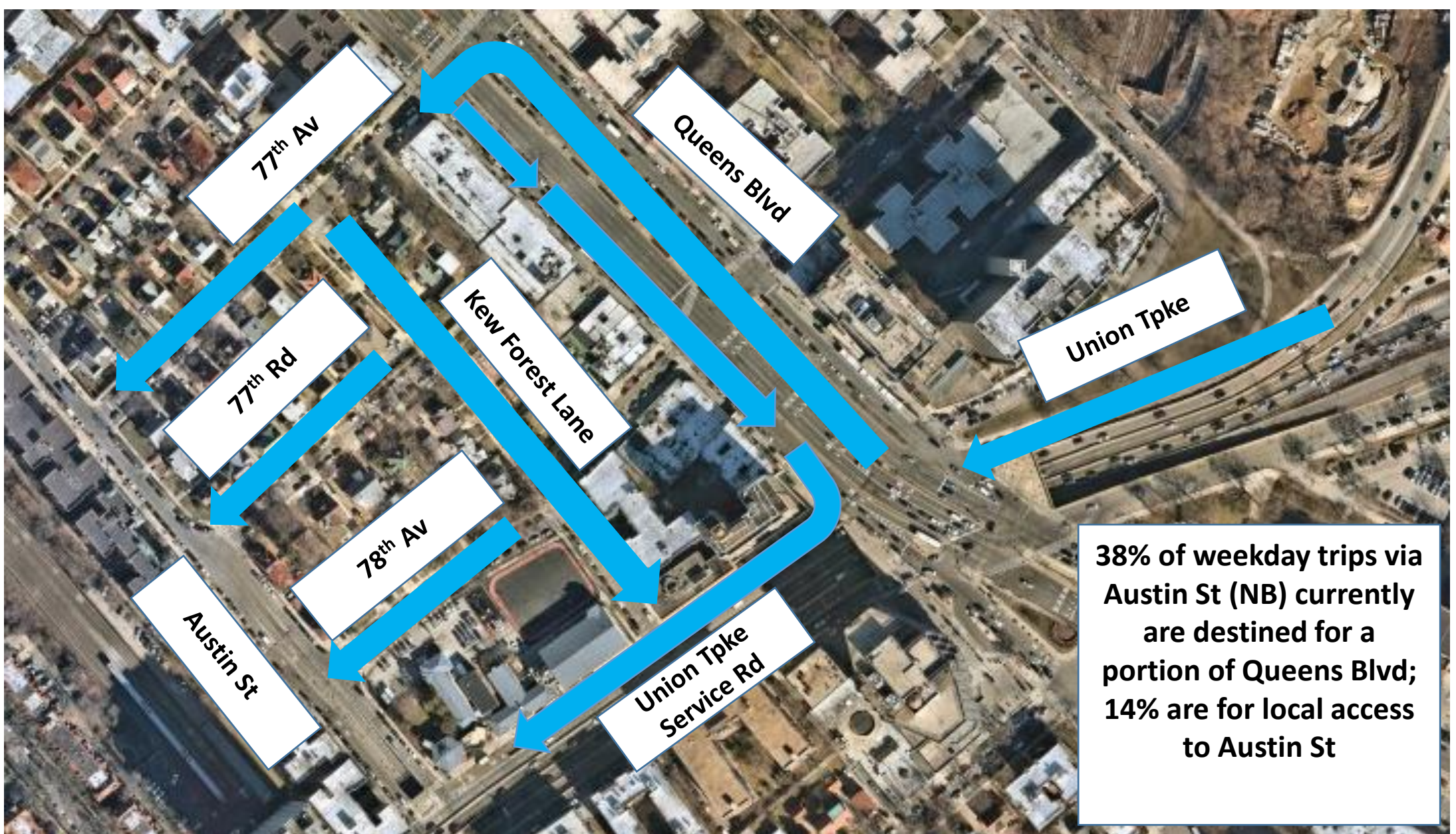
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NYCDOT

Appendix

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Alternatives for accessing Austin St from Union Tpke

Existing Routing

		Going to:			
		WB Union Tpke (MR)		Austin St (at Kew Forest School)	
		Cars	Trucks	Cars	Trucks
Coming from:	WB Union Tpke (MR)	Continue through tunnel under Queens Blvd	Continue through tunnel under Queens Blvd	Continue through tunnel under Queens Blvd > Right turn onto Austin St	Continue through tunnel under Queens Blvd > Right turn onto Austin St
	SB Queens Blvd	Right on 77th Av > Left on Kew Forest Ln > Right on 77th Rd > Left on Austin St > Right on Union Tpke	No legal route for trucks over 33'	Right onto Union Tpke SR > Right onto Austin St	Right onto Union Tpke SR > Right onto Austin St
	NB Queens Blvd	Left on 77th Av > Left on Kew Forest Ln > Right on 77th Rd > Left on Austin St > Right on Union Tpke	No legal route for trucks over 33'	U-turn at 77th Av > Right on Union Tpke SR > Right onto Austin St	U-turn at 77th Av > Right on Union Tpke SR > Right onto Austin St

Proposed Routing

		Going to:			
		WB Union Tpke (main line)		Austin St (at Kew Forest School)	
		Cars	Trucks	Cars	Trucks
Coming from:	WB Union Tpke (MR)	Continue through tunnel under Queens Blvd	Continue through tunnel under Queens Blvd	Right onto Queens Blvd > U-turn at 77th Av > Right on Union Tpke SR > Right onto Austin St	Right onto Queens Blvd > U-turn at 77th Av > Right on Union Tpke SR > Right onto Austin St
	SB Queens Blvd	Right on Union Tpke SR > Merge onto Union Tpke	Right on Union Tpke SR > Merge onto Union Tpke	Right onto Union Tpke SR > Right onto Austin St	Right onto Union Tpke SR > Right onto Austin St
	NB Queens Blvd	U-turn at 77th Av > Right on Union Tpke SR > Merge onto Union Tpke	U-turn at 77th Av > Right on Union Tpke SR > Merge onto Union Tpke	U-turn at 77th Av > Right on Union Tpke SR > Right onto Austin St	U-turn at 77th Av > Right on Union Tpke SR > Right onto Austin St

 = same as existing